REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment and the following remarks are intended to fully respond to the Final Office Action mailed October 23, 2006. In that Office Action, claims 1-21 were examined, and all claims were rejected. More specifically, claims 1, 8, and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Combs et al. (USPN 6,523,065); claims 2-6, 9-11, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. in view of Sonderegger et al. (USPN 6,173,289); claims 7, 18, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. in view of Hammer et al. (USPN 6,076,106); and claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. and Hammer et al. as applied to claim 19, and further in view of Burkett et al. (USPN 6,678,889). Reconsideration of these rejections, as they might apply to the original and amended claims in view of these remarks, is respectfully requested.

In this Response, claim 1 has been amended. No claims have been canceled or are newly added.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 8, and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S. C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Combs et al. (USPN 6,523,065), hereinafter "Combs." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Combs is directed to a distributed resource allocator handling system that allocates computer resources in a network to users. The resource allocator handling system (RAHS) coordinates resource allocation among multiple users, balances the workload assigned to resources, resolves contentions between users, and acquires/maintains information about the capabilities of the resources. The RAHS includes a number of agents each running in a separate process on a computer connected to the network. The agents maintain a database of global network resource information. The information is stored in resource information objects (RIOs) that include information such as resource name, class of resource, network address, and information about the allocation of the resource. It is the network agents not the resources that manage the (RIOs). Additionally, the tasks performed by the resources are not management tasks performed on the (RIOs), rather the tasks are actions such as printing a document (e.g., performed by a printing resource) or sending information through a network (e.g., performed by

a modem). As described in greater detail below, despite their apparent similarities, the claimed invention is distinct from the system disclosed by Combs.

Claim 1 is directed to a method of performing a management task and has been amended to recite "sending a task request to the determined resource to perform the management task on the first managed object." Support for this amendment can be found at least on page 35, lines 13-16; and page 36, lines 11-17 of the Detailed Description. This amendment, further clarifies that the management task recited in claim 1 is performed on the first managed object, and not simply a task to be performed by the resource. Combs does not teach or suggest a process or system that includes "receiving a request to perform the management task in relation to the first managed object; determining which of the first and second resource to call in response to the request; and sending a task request to the determined resource to perform the management task on the first managed object," as recited in newly amended claim 1.

Initially, Applicants respectfully point out that the Office Action does not indicate what portions of Combs correspond to the specific limitations of the claim elements. The Office Action merely lists a number of sections in Combs, and repeats the list for each element of the claims. Nevertheless, as Applicants establish below, Combs does not teach or suggest all the limitations of the pending claims. However, if the rejection is maintained, Applicants kindly request clarification as to which portions of Combs the ~~Office Action~~ believes disclose the specific limitations of the claims.

As described above Combs discloses a central system that is used to allocate resources to users. Users may request that a resource (e.g., printer or modem) perform a task, such as printing a file, or transmitting information through a network. Combs does not teach or suggest that a resource is used to perform management tasks on a managed object. Combs discloses that users may request resources to perform tasks such as printing. However, nowhere does Combs mention that any of the tasks are performed by a resource in relation to an object. Indeed, the only objects disclosed by Combs are resource information objects (RIOs). RIOs include a collection of data fields, each having data about a corresponding resource. However, Combs does not teach or suggest that the resources are used in performing tasks on the RIOs. The RIOs are used only to maintain information (resource name; resource class; network address of the resource) about the resource to allow the resource allocation system to manage the use of the resources by users.

8

In contrast to Combs, claim 1 requires "receiving a request to perform the management task in relation to the first managed object" and "sending a task request to the determined resource to perform the management task on the first managed object." In one embodiment of claim 1, the managed object may be a user object that includes privileges indicating which resources may be utilized by the user. When a request is received to perform a management task on a user object, such as adding or deleting privileges in a user object (managed object) to change a user's ability to access a resource, as part of performing the management task, a task request is sent to the resource to add or delete the user from a list of authorized users. Combs does not teach or suggest a method or system that can manage user objects in such a way.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is distinct and therefore allowable over the disclosure of Combs. Claims 2-12 depend upon claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 13 is directed to a computer program product encoding instructions for executing a method that includes "retrieving task information associated with the new resource, wherein the task information relates to an object type managed by the new resource." Claim 13 thus requires that a new resource have task information related to an object type managed by the new resource. As explained above, the only objects disclosed by Combs are RIOs, which are not managed by or acted upon by the resources. Rather, the RIOs merely store information about a corresponding resource. Combs therefore fails to teach all the elements of claim 13.

For at least these reasons, claim 13 is distinct and allowable over the disclosure of Combs. Claims 14-17 depend upon claim 13 and are allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 2-6, 9-11, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. in view of Sonderegger et al. (USPN 6,173,289) hereinafter "Sonderegger." Applicants traverse this rejection.

Claims 2-6, 9-11, and 17 depend upon one of claims 1 and 13. The Office Action relies on Combs as the primary reference in rejecting claims 2-6, 9-11, and 17; however as described above Combs does not disclose all the elements of the claims, and Sonderegger does not compensate for the deficiency of Combs. Sonderegger is directed to a method for performing actions on resources in a global directory network. Sonderegger discloses the use of action objects representing an action capable of being performed on a resource. However, Sonderegger

does not teach or suggest that a resource performs tasks in relation to a managed object or that a resource has objects managed by the resource, and therefore fails to compensate for the deficiency of Combs.

Claims 7, 18, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. in view of Hamner et al. (USPN 6,076,106), hereinafter "Hamner." Applicants traverse this rejection.

Claim 7 depends upon claim 1. The Office Action relies on Combs as the primary reference in rejecting claim 7. Combs however does not disclose all the elements of the claims, and Hamner does not compensate for the deficiency of Combs. Hamner does not compensate for the deficiency in Combs. Hamner discloses a system for providing information on a computer network that includes a number of devices. A number of tasks are provided, such that each task can be performed upon at least one of the devices. Hamner discloses displaying to a user in a first area, representations corresponding to the devices, and in a second area displaying tasks. A user first selects a representation and, in response to the user input, information indicating which of the tasks can be performed upon the selected device is displayed in the second area. Hamner does not however disclose that a resource performs tasks in relation to performing a management task on an object, and therefore fails to compensate for the deficiency of Combs.

Claim 18 recites, *inter alia*, "wherein in response to receipt of a request to perform a network administration task, the management module performing task functions on the associated objects of more than one resource." Neither Combs nor Hamner disclose this feature of claim 18. The RIOs taught by Combs each contain information regarding a single resource. Accordingly, Combs describes the creation or RIOs when a new resource is added, or changing the RIOs to reflect changes in the resource (e.g., allocation of the resource), however there is no teaching or suggestion of "in response to receipt of a request to perform a network administration task, the management module performing task functions on the associated objects *of more than one resource*." Thus, Combs fails to teach all the elements of claim 18.

As described above, Hamner discloses displaying associations of devices with tasks performable on the devices. The display may include hierarchical, schematic, or geographical representations of the devices on the network. In response to a user input selecting a device or group, the tasks performable by that device or group are identified on the display. A user may initiate any one of the displayed tasks by applying a user input selecting that task. Nevertheless,

Hamner does not teach or suggest that "in response to receipt of a request to perform a network administration task, the management module performing task functions on the associated objects of more than one resource," as recited in claim 18, and thus does not make up for the deficiency in Combs. Claims 19 depends upon claim 18 and is allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Combs et al. and Hamner as applied to claim 19, and further in view of Burkett et al. (USPN 6,678,889), hereinafter "Burkett." Applicants traverse this rejection.

Claim 20 depends upon claim 18. Combs does not disclose all the elements of claim 18, and the combination of Hamner and Burkett does not compensate for the deficiency of Combs. Burkett discloses a method of defining and sharing resources within an Extensible Markup Language (XML) document that defines a console (i.e., a graphical user interface or GUI) for managing application programs and tasks associated therewith. Burkett does not disclose performing task functions on the associated objects of more than one resource, and therefore fails to compensate for the deficiencies in Combs and Hamner. Accordingly, claim 20 is allowable over the combination of Combs, Hamner, and Burkett.

Conclusion

This Amendment fully responds to the Final Office Action mailed on October 23, 2006. Still, that Office Action may contain arguments and rejections and that are not directly addressed by this Amendment because they are rendered moot in light of the preceding arguments in favor of patentability. Hence, failure of this Amendment to directly address an argument raised in the Office Action should not be taken as an indication that the Applicants believe the argument to have merit. Furthermore, the claims of the present application may include other elements, not discussed in this Amendment, which are not shown, taught, or otherwise suggested by the art of record. Accordingly, the preceding arguments in favor of patentability are advanced without prejudice to other bases of patentability.
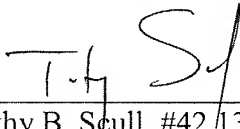
It is believed that no fees are due with this Amendment. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiencies or credit any overpayment with respect to this patent application to deposit account number 13-2725.

In light of the above remarks and amendments, it is believed that the application is now in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any additional issues need to be resolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attempt to resolve those issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 12/22/06

27488
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE
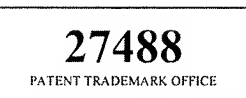
Timothy B. Scull, #42,137
MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0903
303.357.1648